

circumstances, somebody is willing to take that penalty, willing to take that penalty and retire early. So I would oppose the motion to return.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Vard Johnson.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, I am somewhat sympathetic to the points made by Senator Fowler and that is that the reduction of the voluntary retirement age from sixty to fifty-five will not cost the state any additional dollars, that there are some humanitarian reasons for permitting individuals to retire at age fifty-five and be able to take the retirement pay. On the other hand, the thing that has disturbed me about our public pension programs is that they are constructed in such a fashion as to permit a number of employees to avail themselves of several different kinds of retirement benefits at a great cost to you and I as a taxpayer. If a state employee may retire at age fifty-five and receive retirement pay, that state employee may then spend ten years working at a job, acquire forty quarters of social security, then retire from a social security program, I should say just plain "retire", and begin to draw the minimum social security benefits which my recollection are is like \$187 a month right now. Those are the minimum benefits which incidentally one obtains by I believe having contributed \$50 a quarter for forty quarters. And as you and I well know in the public employment systems in our country today, we have built in a device that permits a number of public employees to participate in two if not three different retirement programs and that participation in those programs ends up costing us, the taxpayer, a lot of dollars. There are many public employees today who receive more money in a retired state than they earned, than they actually earned. Now that is not a Nebraska employee. I am not saying that is one of our state employees. On the other hand, if we permit the reduction of the retirement age for the good humanitarian grounds that Senator Fowler pointed out, and I agree with those grounds, we then also set up the possibility of a number of our personnel retiring at age 55, then going right back into the labor force, which is their legal prerogative, which they can certainly do, getting ten years of work time, and then picking up the social security benefit. I support the amendment.

PRESIDENT: Senator Pirsch.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. Senator Johnson makes a very good point and I have